

**CITY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW  
MEMORANDUM**

DATE: January 30, 2003

TO: City Council

FROM: Michael A. Fuller, Capital Program Manager (Acting)  
Cathy R. Lazarus, Public Works Director

SUBJECT: FEBRUARY 4, 2003 STUDY SESSION—COMMUNITY CENTER/SENIOR  
CENTER UPDATE AND POLICY DISCUSSION

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**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this study session item is to update the City Council on the status of the Community Center and Senior Center projects, and to review and discuss outstanding policy decisions needed to advance the Senior Center project.

**BACKGROUND**

**Community Center Design**

On August 6, 2002, the City Council approved the exterior design concept for the Community Center building and authorized staff to proceed with detailed design. The detailed design consists of two components: design development and construction documents. The design development phase advances schematic design, construction plans and specifications to approximately the 60 percent level of completion. Directions on foundation, building systems and materials, interior design and site improvements are established, estimates of probable construction cost are developed and alternatives are identified to reduce costs, if necessary.

The project architect, BSA Architects, has essentially completed the design development phase, expending approximately \$420,000 of the \$1.12 million architectural contract budget, leaving a balance of approximately \$700,000. The design is now at a potential stopping point if Council wishes to shift resources and priorities to the Senior Center. Further discussion of this option follows under "Analysis."

The remaining balance in the design contract is for refining the design and completing the plans, specifications and construction documents used to obtain a building permit and advertise for construction bids. Constructibility reviews and updating the probable construction cost are also included in this phase.

### **Interim Senior Center Facility on Escuela Avenue**

After reviewing a number of options for a temporary Senior Center, the City Council directed staff on November 19, 2002 to construct a temporary modular Senior Center on the existing Senior Center site on Escuela Avenue. A site plan of the proposed temporary Senior Center is included as Attachment 1. Design work for the site, a modular building and mobile kitchen, is under way, and the temporary modular facility is expected to be finished and ready for use in fall 2003.

Because the temporary modular building on the Senior Center site will occupy the Senior Center community garden, the City Council also directed staff to establish a temporary garden on the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) right-of-way north of the existing Senior Center site. Staff continues to work with the SFPUC to obtain a permit and reviewed plans with the gardeners at their quarterly meeting on December 19, 2002. The temporary garden is scheduled to be completed in early spring 2003. Approval of a permit by the SFPUC is expected in February 2003.

### **Senior Center Master Plan**

The City Council also approved the Senior Center Master Plan on November 19, 2002. The goals adopted by the City Council to guide the development of the Master Plan are shown in Attachment 2, and a copy of the Master Plan is provided as Attachment 3.

On December 10, 2002, the City Council authorized staff to enter into real property discussions with the nonprofit group Avenidas regarding the senior day health-care facility, and those discussions are under way.

### **Permanent Senior Center**

On August 6, 2002, in conjunction with approving the exterior design concept for the Community Center and authorizing detailed design to proceed, the City Council directed that a financing plan for the new Senior Center be developed and in place before the Community Center is advertised for construction bids. The City Council also authorized staff to obtain architectural design services for the new Senior Center. The

new Senior Center will be 25,000 square feet in size with expansion capabilities for another 5,000 square feet.

On November 19, 2002, the City Council approved the Senior Center Master Plan and directed staff to implement the temporary modular Senior Center. Staff advised in the Council report that there are sufficient funds in the Senior Center capital improvement project to fund the \$2,530,000 interim facility, but additional funds are needed to design the new Senior Center.

### **ANALYSIS**

There are a number of outstanding policy questions that need to be addressed at this time by the City Council. Among them are:

1. Whether in this economic climate it is feasible to fund both the Community Center and Senior Center.
2. Whether to stop Community Center design at the end of design development and reallocate budget and staff resources to the Senior Center.
3. Whether to bid or sole-source Senior Center design services.
4. How to design a process that advances a new Senior Center to construction as quickly as possible?

Each of these issues is analyzed individually below.

### **Senior Center/Community Center Financing**

The current project cost estimate for the 25,000 square foot Senior Center, including staff time, consultant services, construction, cost rise due to inflation and all other project costs, is approximately \$17.5 million.

In the current economic climate, it is unlikely that sufficient new funding will be identified to design and build the Senior Center before the Community Center is ready for construction bids at the end of 2003. Staff from the Public Works, Community Services and Finance and Administrative Services Departments have met several times to evaluate potential funding strategies. This effort did not result in the identification of any significant new funding for the Senior Center project.

Recognizing current funding challenges, the only way to assure the Senior Center is able to proceed in the foreseeable future is to stop and unfund the Community Center and shift budget and staff resources from the Community Center project to the Senior Center project. The available balance in the Community Center budget is approximately \$14.6 million from an original budget of \$15.5 million. The \$900,000 expended to date funded the staff time, architectural and engineering services, City administration and other expenses to bring the Community Center project to its current level of completion.

In adopting the Senior Center Master plan, it was understood the facilities identified in the Plan would be implemented in phases. Advancing the Senior Center before the Community Center changes the phasing but not the ultimate goal to fully implement the Master Plan.

Modifying the phasing does, however, have important implications. Although the Community Center does not have the structural problems of the Senior Center, it has many of the same deficiencies and inefficiencies associated with older buildings. Recreational programs are limited by the Community Center building. The auditorium is not well used by the community because of its size, appearance, inadequate catering facilities and general condition. Portions of the facility, including the auditorium basement and rest rooms, are not ADA-accessible. The building does not have complete fire sprinkler and alarm coverage and is not fully air-conditioned. Without significant investment and upgrades, these conditions will remain until the facility is replaced. During the programming phase of the Community Center, the City Council identified a community need for flexible meeting space for nonprofit organizations serving Mountain View clients. This goal will also be deferred. Another important project goal was to provide adequate space for Community Services staff. Although some interim improvements can be made, overall work areas will remain deficient.

Stopping design at the end of design development has cost implications if the project remains on hold for more than three to four years. Building technology will change potentially requiring redesign of heating, cooling, electrical and mechanical systems. Changes in Building Code could also cause other design changes. Future City Councils could rethink the size, siting and architectural design increasing future project costs. Finally, the entire project will cost more in the future due to inflation.

If the existing Community Center building is left in place for another 5 to 10 years, a number of small projects should be performed. These projects fall into two categories, one of which is deferred maintenance which includes minor repairs to security, water, air conditioning, roof and lighting systems. The other category is minor building

enhancements to make the building more comfortable and functional, including relocating the dumpster, expanding the air conditioning system, increasing lighting in the parking lot and other related items. The total cost of these projects is not expected to exceed \$200,000. These maintenance items and minor enhancements will not address most of the significant building deficiencies. If the City Council elects to change priorities, staff will return to the Council with a refined list and cost estimate for these projects. If these projects were funded from the Community Center budget, the remaining balance would be approximately \$14.4 million.

If the remaining Community Center funds and two potential new funding sources are allocated to the Senior Center, the project would require an estimated additional \$2.5 million to fully fund construction. These new funding sources include the unspent balance from the Senior Center Master Plan budget (\$150,000) and uncommitted interest from Park In-Lieu Fees (\$425,000). A summary table is provided below.

<b>Senior Center Funding Sources</b>		
<b>Description</b>	<b>New Funding Source Amount</b>	<b>Amount Remaining to be Funded</b>
Senior Center Project Estimate		\$17,500,000
Community Center Project Balance	\$14,400,000	\$3,100,000
Unspent Balance in Senior Center Master Plan Budget	\$150,000	\$2,950,000
Uncommitted Interest from Park In-Lieu Fees	\$425,000	2,525,000

This gap could be filled in a variety of ways. Outside grants could be secured. Less desirable strategies could include reducing the CIP reserve balances. Based on the proposed schedule, we will have approximately two years to identify supplemental funding. Staff will also examine potential strategies to reduce project costs.

#### Senior Center Project Delivery Process

A building project typically begins with programming that involves developing a clear vision and goals for the project with input from the building users, the public and the City Council, and translating these goals into preliminary concepts while considering

site opportunities and constraints. Preliminary building size and space utilization are also identified at the programming phase. Project design follows the programming work.

For the new Senior Center, these topics were addressed in the Senior Center Master Plan process that included a survey of Senior Center users, meetings with Senior Center users, meetings with the Parks and Recreation Commission and study sessions and regular meetings with the City Council. As a result of these earlier efforts, there appears to be sufficient direction from both the seniors and the City Council to proceed with design.

Forgoing a lengthy project programming process, implementing the approved Master Plan and developing an efficient process for review, comment and guidance from the City Council and Senior Center users will accelerate the delivery of the new Senior Center.

#### Architectural Design Services

Several options are available for selecting an architect for the Senior Center design. The options, in order of the longest to the shortest process time, are: (1) issuing letters of interest and Requests for Proposal to qualified firms; and (2) sole-sourcing the work to one firm.

The City's policy on selecting professional services provides that professional services consultants (architects, engineers, etc.) are selected on the basis of demonstrated competence and qualification. State law specifically prohibits selection of professional services for public works projects on the basis of low bid. The City's policy permits a sole-source contract for professional services if it is justified and is in the City's best interest. The policy cites some basic criteria for sole-sourcing that include: (1) familiarity with the project due to having accomplished previous phases; (2) urgency to comply with regulations; (3) recognized authority in the field; (4) availability; and (5) credibility with agencies for required approvals.

The Community Center architect, BSA Architects (BSA), also prepared the Senior Center Master Plan and is very familiar with the City's goals for the Senior Center project and the opportunities and constraints of the site. This knowledge should enable BSA to proceed with project design quickly, saving the cost and time of bringing a new consultant up to speed on the project. By suspending the design work on the Community Center project, BSA has the capacity to reassign resources to the Senior

Center project immediately. BSA has designed over a dozen municipal facilities with senior components, including the Cupertino Senior Center.

Staff believes it is appropriate to waive the time-consuming consultant selection process and negotiate a sole-source contract with BSA to design the Senior Center. The sooner project design begins, the sooner construction can start and be completed, allowing the seniors to relocate from the temporary modular Senior Center to a new, permanent facility.

### City Council Participation

To streamline the project, staff recommends working with the full City Council in periodic study sessions, rather than an ad hoc committee (often followed by City Council study session), as was the case with the Community Center. Staff believes that an ad hoc committee is not as critical for this project as the programming and master planning phases were largely completed by the City Council during the Senior Center Master Plan process.

For the Community Center project, the City Council in 1999 established a Council Ad Hoc Committee comprised of three Councilmembers to guide staff during the programming and preliminary concept development. Over 10 meetings and 34 months, the Council Ad Hoc Committee identified the desired uses for the new Community Center, the building architectural style, its relationship to the surrounding park and neighborhood and the level of community involvement. The Community Center project was also discussed at seven study sessions.

### Senior Participation

One of the critical elements in a successful Senior Center project will be continued coordination with Senior Center users. Staff recommends two elements to the coordination effort. The first is frequent update meetings at the Senior Center. Staff made such presentations during the Senior Center Master Plan process and during the effort to find a location for an interim Senior Center. The presentations were generally attended by approximately 30 Senior Center users. Staff also met periodically with representatives from the Community Services Agency (CSA), which provides the nutrition program, and Mountain View/Los Altos and Foothill/DeAnza Community College Districts, which provide adult education programs.

Staff also recommends forming an ad hoc committee of Senior Center users to advise staff during the project design. This committee should be comprised of individuals

who represent the major activities at the Senior Center such as the garden, the game room, the nutrition program and the music program. The committee could also include representatives from CSA and the community college districts.

A senior ad hoc committee similar to the one described above was recently used successfully by the City of Sunnyvale to design their senior center, which is currently under construction.

#### Benefits of Streamlining the Process

The proposed strategy achieves a more streamlined process, shaving approximately one year from the project schedule presented to the City Council at their July 22, 2002 study session. A comparison of the previous schedule and the proposed streamlined process



is shown in Attachment 4. Advancing the schedule as shown has the benefit not only of moving the senior programs into the new, permanent facility sooner but also reduces the cost rise association with inflation on the project budget.

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905-02-04-03M-E^

Attachments: 1. Interim Senior Center Site Plan  
2. Senior Center Master Plan Goals  
3. Senior Center Master Plan  
4. Project Schedule Comparison

cc: APWD—Ko, TPM, ZA, RM, RS—Petersen, CPM(A), CP, SP—von Borck,  
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